

June 30, 2003

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Further Notice on BOC & Independent LEC Separate  
Affiliate Requirements for Interexchange Services,  
WC Docket No. 02-112; CC Docket No. 00-175**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The three attached documents respond to paragraphs 39 and 42 in the above referenced matter (pursuant to FCC 03-111 and DA 03-1187).

Specifically, footnote 9 in the April 14, 2003 attachment (comments), and footnote 16 in the November 4, 2002 attachment (reply comments) provide guidance as to why the Commission should consider phasing out the “equal access” requirement for “ILECS” that face effective competition. I have also attached an op-ed from Ray Gifford of the Progress and Freedom Foundation on the same topic.

Western Wireless is a Competitive Eligible Telecommunications provider in fourteen states and has been designated by the Commission as a “CETC” to serve the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Western Wireless, in the context of addressing “regulatory parity” arguments put forth by the rural telephone industry, has consistently advocated in Docket 96-45, for the elimination of unnecessary and outdated wireline-legacy regulations. We respectfully suggest that the time has come for the Commission to re-evaluate the usefulness of the “equal access” obligation that exists on local exchange carriers.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Rubin  
Director of Federal Government Affairs  
202-654-5903

Attachments (3)

